

**Who Am I?: Correlation Between Factors That Relate to
Development of Individual Personal Values**

Honors Thesis (Honor 499)

By

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Abstract

All individuals, whether consciously or not, are constantly developing a personal brand that is unique to them. This personal brand is what differentiates individuals from each other and in order to properly develop a personal brand, individuals must first have a deep understanding of their own personal values. The research in this project will explore the possible relation of three factors thought to relate to an individual's understanding of his or her personal values. The factors that are analyzed in this project include opportunities available, learned experiences from professional/personal involvement and future aspirations.

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Process Analysis Statement

The research conducted in this project is the first step in the process of understanding one's personal brand. In order for an individual to develop one's personal brand, he or she needs to have a good understanding of what values and morals are important to them. This research seeks to identify three factors hypothesized to be positively correlated in an individual's development that serve as the foundation for future research on this topic. The three factors in this project, opportunities available, learned experiences through professional/personal involvement, and future aspirations, were analyzed through empirical research in a 24 question survey that was sent to a random sample of students at Ball State University. The details of that survey, as well as the profile of participants that were involved, can be found in the Method section of this project. With the importance of developing a personal brand not being as prevalent until recent years, there is not much literature available on the topic. Thus, the research conducted in this project is intended to serve as a foundation on personal brand development for future research.

As a student studying Marketing at Ball State, I enjoyed the opportunity to conduct the research for this project. I enjoy the challenge of investigating how individuals think because every individual is unique in his or her own way. This is what makes marketing a product, brand, service etc. that much more complicated in the modern market place. Even more complicated however, is being able to market your own personal brand that effectively portrays the values that you hold important to yourself. It is this promotion of your own personal brand that I have always found intriguing and why I am going into professional sales after college. As someone

who is always cognizant about acting within my own personal brand, I believe it is an important process for which everyone should be actively involved. This is a common process not specific to any major, college of study, gender, or year in school. All individuals should be trying to engage in activities that align with their own morals and values. In order to do so, everyone first needs to take an introspective look at themselves to understand those values that comprise one's personal strength and weaknesses needed development. In today's age of social media, where one's activities are frequently recorded and posted online, individuals need to maintain a positive image they would be proud of when portraying themselves publicly to the outside world. Everyone deserves to live their truth, and it is up to every individual to understand what their truth is, and showcase it to the rest of the world.

Who Am I?: Correlation Between Factors That Relate to Development of Individual Personal Values

Literature Review

In order to understand the reason for this research, we must first properly define personal branding. A study conducted on companies from eight different industries on the Top500 company list in South Africa, found personal brand to be defined as, "the meaningful perceptions about the values and qualities of the individual, and a reflection of what the individual believes in; and is expressed by what they do and how they do it. These perceptions also include the values the individual is perceived to have" (Potgeiter 2017). There are two parts to every brand, both personal and professional. There are both the way you see yourself, brand identity, and the way others see you, brand image. In order to effectively manage both parts of your brand, you must first understand the values and beliefs that you possess. In this way, you can more easily portray those values to others in order for them to see you in a true

manner. These values that individuals deem important to themselves are completely unique to every individual and are the factors that differentiate individuals from one another. By individuals differentiating themselves from other individuals, it allows them to have their own persona and develop a personal brand that is unique to them.

Another way individuals can understand their personal brand, is by understanding the brand image that they portray of themselves to others. Brand image is defined in the *Journal of Marketing* as “perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory” (Keller 1993). This means that the associations that others have of an individual’s overall image are based on the way that individual acts. These associations “contain the meaning of the brand for consumers” (Keller 1993) and are essential to others’ regarding what an individual stands for. In order for someone to have control over their brand image, they must actively portray themselves in a manner that yields positive associations in the minds of others. By an individual portraying a sense of authenticity by understanding and living these values and beliefs, this will affect others’ perceptions that establish both interpersonal and social trustworthy associations with said individual.

An individual who has a strong understanding of his or her personal values can better showcase those values in their personal brand. This idea was expressed in a journal for developing young professionals that stated, “Before starting to build a personal branding structure, a person needs to clear out the fundamental elements to live a conscious life, based on clear existential aspects that the person will follow in all the professional and personal activities will carry out” (Isles 2018). Once individuals understand what is truly important to them, they are able to act in a way that aligns with those values. Once individuals understand

what their values are, they will be able to seek organizations, friend groups, and professions that share those same values. In doing so, whether they realize it or not, individuals are promoting the personal brand that they would want to anyone that comes in contact with them. Without someone first thinking introspectively on what values are important to them, this could lead to them promoting a brand that is not truly representative of themselves.

The research within this project hopes to build the foundation for individuals to utilize their full potential when promoting their personal brand. This idea follows the self-actualization theory. This theory states that an individual who is a self-actualizing person is “one who achieves the full use and exploitation of talents, capacities, and potential” (Brooker 1975). Thus, in order for individuals to have “full use” of their potential, they must first understand what values and abilities they have that make up this potential. Once an individual understands their values, they can utilize them to reach for their full potential in everything that they are involved in. By striving to reach for one’s full potential while keeping in line with morals and values, this allows the individual to shape a personal brand that they would desire.

Individuals who have taken the time to understand what values make up their own personal brand will be able to more easily communicate that personal brand to others. This will allow the individual to project a more authentic brand persona to others in both personal and professional relationships. In an article about developing ones brand, a prominent author identified four criteria to do so known as the “C.A.R.E. criteria” (Shatto 2019). The “A” identified in this criteria is “Authentic”, and the author suggests that in order to be seen as such, individuals must “create your value in a way that seems candid, honest, and without an ulterior motive. Maximize authenticity by keeping congruency through words and actions, full

disclosure, and candor – or ‘being real’” (Shatto 2019). So in other words, for an individual to grow their personal brand, they must appear authentic when communicating with others. The best way to do so, is by the individual talking about something they are knowledgeable, comfortable, and therefore, confident about which would be identified by the individual after he/she understands what they stand for. It is always easiest to talk about something you enjoy, and individuals must first understand what exactly they enjoy in order to publicly discuss them with others.

Individuals attempting to understand their personal values is not a process that only happens once in the individual’s life, but rather should be a continuous process of personal development. Personal values can sometimes change as individuals mature and learn and experience new things, and it is important that individuals reevaluate their values to make sure they are still engaged in activities that align. This idea of self-reflection was published in a *Leadership & Management Journal* and suggests that “It will help you identify the tools you have and the areas you need to improve. It is something that is an ongoing, life-long process and not something that you do when you start out, then put on a shelf” (Brennan 2014). By continuing to identify what values and tools are important to an individual, it will make promoting them to others much easier. As individuals grow and mature, it is essential that they never stop trying to learn about themselves. This will allow them to continue to shape what their personal brand so they can portray an accurate representation of themselves.

The process of developing and promoting a personal brand has said to be broken down into three steps and follows product or corporate branding process. These steps were identified in the *Journal of Marketing Management* which states, “First, the individual is encourage to

look inside themselves to discover their key identifying attributes: ‘your unique promises of value’. They then construct a compelling ‘personal brand statement’ around the attribute set. Finally, they create a strategy for making the brand visible to the outside world” (Shepherd 2005). The breakdown of this process shows that in order for an individual to develop a “personal brand statement” for themselves, they must first understand what values make them unique. This process will help individuals understand what differentiates them from others, as well as what values that could be shared with others. Only with a true introspective analysis of themselves, will individuals be able to truly promote these values to the outside world.

Individuals who have a strong understanding of themselves have an easier time promoting themselves to others. This process is important in order for individuals to be properly understood by their peers. *Marketing Education Review* journal states that, “a personal brand is a perception held in someone else’s mind that must be managed effectively in order to influence how an individual is viewed by others” (Stanton 2013). It is important that individuals represent themselves in a true manner in the professional world. Being authentic opens more doors for individuals than trying to pretend to be someone he or she is not. That is why individuals promoting a personal brand that is a true representations of themselves is important because it shows others a level of authenticity. This authentic personal brand will allow the individual to manage how others see them, while being true to his or her own morals and beliefs.

Individuals who develop a true personal brand are able to use it in a professional setting that will benefit them greatly. Suzanne Bates in her book *The American Salesman*, says “Wherever you are today in your professional life, you can start sending strong, positive signals

that will cut through the clutter of day to day business and create buzz about you. Everyone has the power to create their own positive personal brand” (Bates 2006). Promoting a positive personal brand could lead to more professional opportunities for those that choose to do so. In modern day business, it is not who you know, but who knows you. Thus, individuals must make sure that everyone that they meet, understands who they really are. This way when individuals are talked about when they are not around, all parties involved will have a clear, positive picture of that individual which will make them appear more authentic and honest.

An individual’s personal brand is something that will define the way others see the individual, whether he or she wants it or not. This is why it is important for an individual to continue to manage his or her activities and actions that will align with a positive personal brand. According to a study conducted in *The Journal of Research in Business Education* it suggested that, “Personal branding is an intentional process for students to promote or market themselves for entry into the job market” (Hood 2014) as well as, “Personal brands are based upon reputation – whether one wants it or not” (Hood 2014). This intentional process of promoting one’s personal brand allows individuals to manage the way that others perceive them. If an individual is not diligent about managing his or her own personal brand, the public will begin to make assumptions based on the perceptions that they have. This is why it is absolutely imperative for individuals to be cognizant about their own personal brand, especially for those that are attempting to enter the job market.

Once individuals have developed their personal brand based on their values and morals, it is important for individuals to promote that brand publicly. With the growing online trend of social media, it is important that individuals use public platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn

to promote a positive image. In a study conducted by CareerBuilder it found that “60 percent of business investigate the social media accounts of potential employees and nearly one-quarter have fired an employee over something found on social media” (Grey 2017). With organizations actively looking at applicants social media platforms during the hiring process, it is important that individuals manage the content that these organizations will find. If individuals are diligent about promoting a positive personal brand on various social media networks, potential employers will have no cause for concern when looking through said sites. It is important that an individual understands his or her own personal brand not only for personal growth, but also to promote said brand on social media to provide potential employers, as well as the various public, with a true representation of who he or she is.

Professional organizations want to not only hire individuals who they like, but also who they know can bring something unique and authentic to the organization – a differential advantage or personal brand. The same way individuals want to work for an organization that will provide value for themselves, the organization is looking for a similar exchange from the individual. In an article published in *Marketing News*, the author identifies three C’s of a personal brand; Communication, Competencies, and Character. The second C, Competencies, focuses on this value exchange between individuals and organizations. The author notes that during interviews individuals will be asked about their abilities because “organizations want employees who can do something of value for them. Individuals offer value through the unique abilities they’ve developed from experience, study and training” (Hagenbuch 2017). By individuals identifying and reflecting on their own strengths and weaknesses, they will be able to better articulate them in a professional setting. This articulation will lead to members of the

organization starting to shape what they perceive the individuals personal brand to be. This is why it is important that individuals accurately portray their abilities, as well as anything else that they would want to be known for in a professional setting.

In the practice of developing a personal brand, it is important that individuals maintain a level of truth and honesty about themselves when attempting to establish relationships with other individuals. The way individuals grow relationships, both professional and personal, with others is similar to a concept called relationship marketing. In a study looking at the variables of Commitment-Trust Theory, relationship marketing was defined as, “all marketing activities directed toward establishing, developing, and maintaining successful relational exchanges” (Morgan 1994). In order to successfully establish and maintain relationships, there needs to be open two-way communication from both parties involved. As noted in the earlier mentioned study, it was found that “commitment and trust lead directly to cooperative behaviors that are conducive to relationship marketing success” (Morgan 1994). This idea suggests that in order for individuals to grow relationships with individuals in their professional and personal networks, they must be seen as trustworthy individuals. In order to do so, individuals have to understand their own personal values in order to find true common ground with others.

When individuals connect with other individuals who have shared values, they are growing their networks. These networks can be used for professional or personal growth in the future, so it is important that individuals actively attempt to connect with as many people as possible. *The Personnel and Guidance Journal* defines networking as the “systematic process of developing helpful contacts, linking people for assisting, supporting, and helping each other find needed resources, information, job leads, opportunities, and feedback” (Rawlins 1983).

Individuals who develop a proper network will be able to utilize various members of it when trying to grow both professionally and personally. That means that in order to grow said networks, individuals need to be open and honest when connecting with other people so that every member of these networks has a true understanding of that individual. By connecting with members of these networks over shared values and beliefs, this enables members of these networks to more effectively help the individual grow in the future.

In a study that looked at career development and personal success of students in college that was published in *Management* magazine, the writer found that “the most extensive period of development includes situational and experiential learning” (Samardzija 2017). This is why the research conducted in this project looked at the various experience levels of the respondents. Experience truly is one of the greatest teachers, as many individuals learn best by actively trying to do something new. By looking at the various experience levels of the respondents in this study, this attempted to provide an understanding of how well these respondents understood their own skills. As individuals become confident in their abilities to take on the various tasks that involved in a given profession, being a good student, or being a member of an organization, the more these individuals will contribute to the overall end goal of said organization.

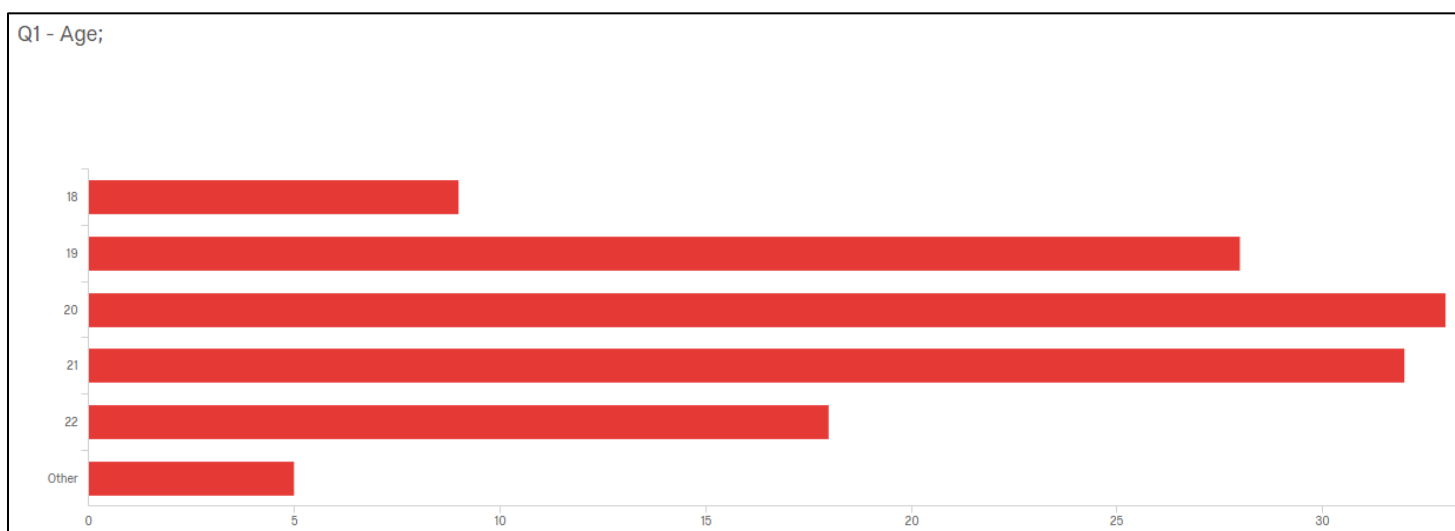
Method

Subjects

The sample of the population that was used in this survey were student’s ages 18-22 who were currently enrolled in a mid-sized Midwestern university, Ball State University, located in Muncie Indiana. These subjects were selected from a randomized email list and all responses

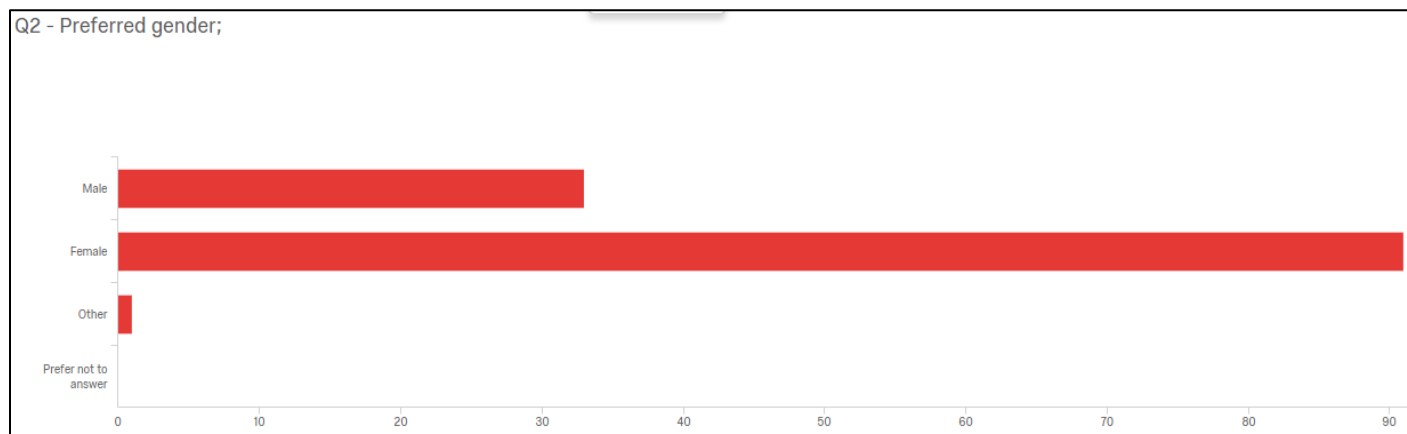
were anonymous. There were 128 total responses for this survey with responses covering all ages, genders, ethnicities, years in school and colleges of study.

This survey's sample was restricted to student's ages 18-22 found in the sample frame from which they were randomly selected. Any respondents who said they were older or younger than those ages were not included in the final data for this survey. As shown in the chart below 9 respondents indicated that they were 18 years of age, 28 indicated that they were 19 years of age, 33 indicated that they were 20 years of age, 32 indicate that they were 21 years of age, and 18 indicated that they were 22 years of age. Those that selected Other were not included in this study.

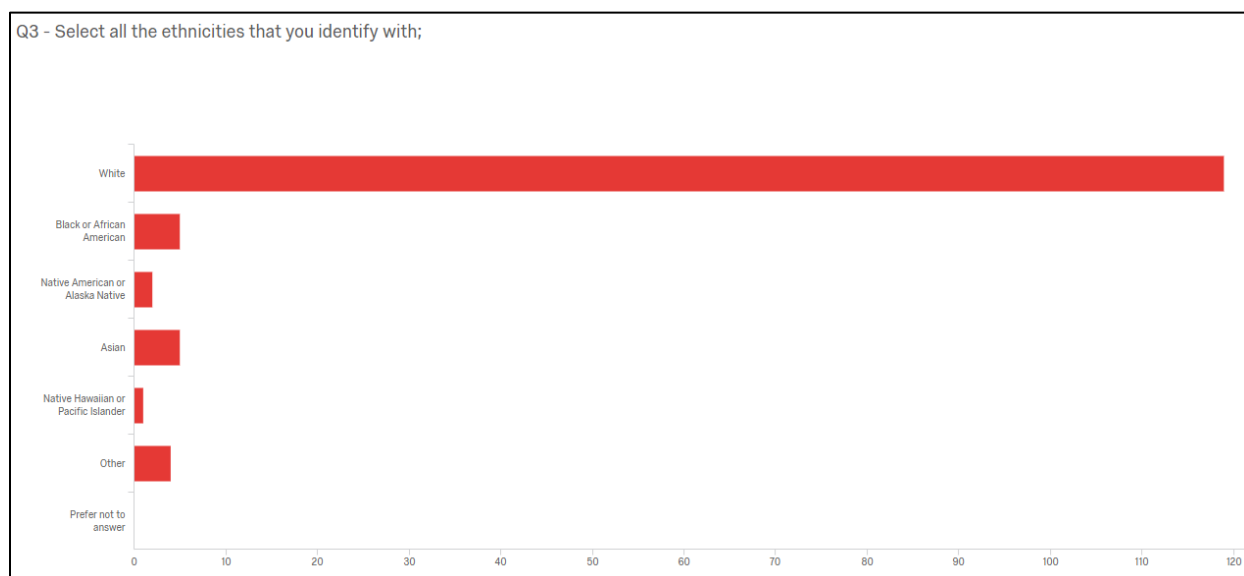


Respondents were then asked to identify which gender they most closely identified with, and the results can be found in the following chart. In total, 33 respondents identified as male, 91 identified as female, and 1 identified as gender fluid. As one can see with this data, the number of respondents who identified as female greatly outweighed those that identified as

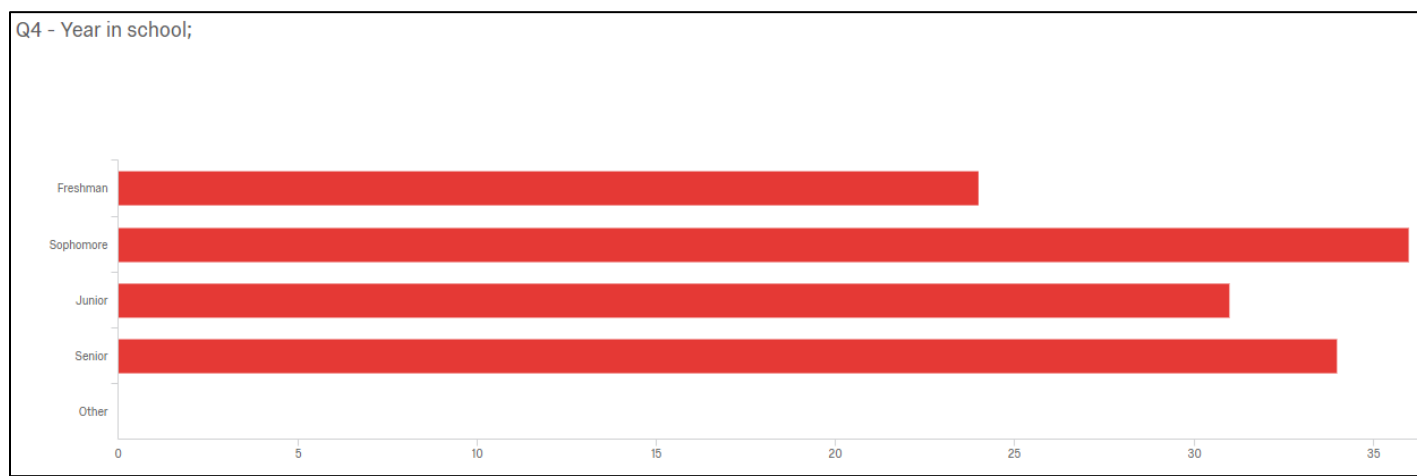
male or as a gender not listed in the question. The results for this question can be found on the following chart.



Respondents were then asked to select all the ethnicities that they identify with. Of the respondents 119 identified as White, 5 identified as Black or African American, 5 identified as Asian, 4 identified as Other, 2 identified as Native American or Alaska Native and 1 identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. Seen in the chart below, the respondents who identified as White greatly outweighed other ethnicities in this research.

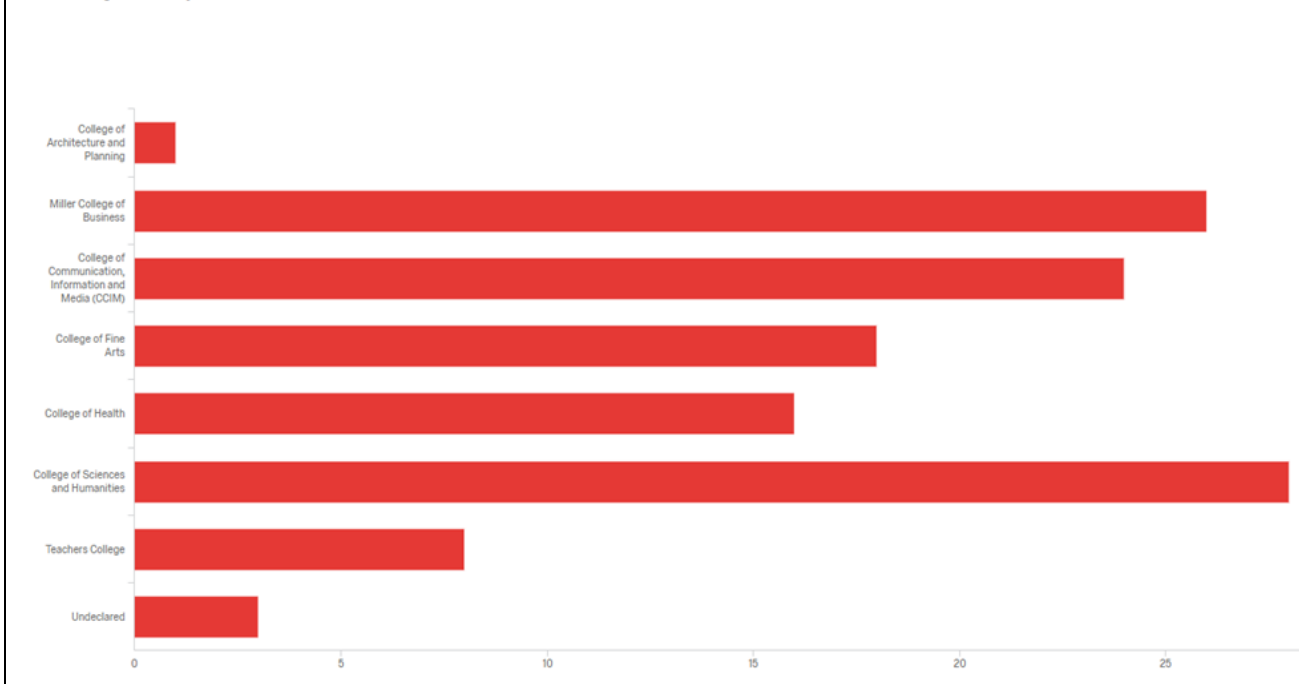


As a way of analyzing the various experience and education levels of the respondents, subjects were asked to identify their current year in school. Of the respondents, 24 were Freshman, 36 were Sophomores, 31 were Juniors and 34 were Seniors. With each grade level having adequate responses for each grade, this allowed for an accurate representation of the various types of students at Ball State. This information can be seen in the following chart



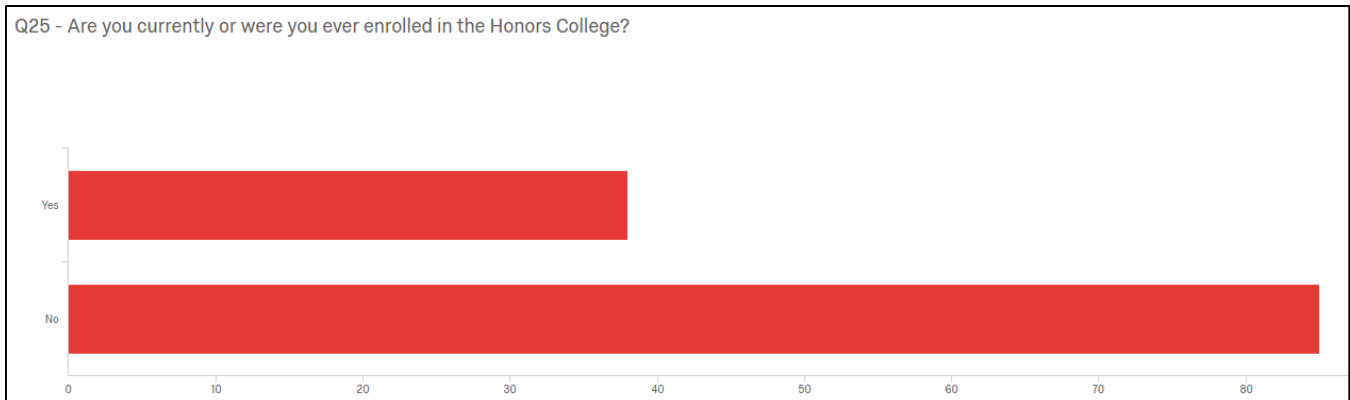
The survey then asked the respondents to select their respective college of study with the following results; 28 respondents from the College of Sciences and Humanities, 26 respondents in Miller College of Business, 24 respondents in College of Communication, Information and Media, 18 respondents from the College of Fine Arts, 16 respondents from the College of Health, 8 respondents from the Teachers College, 3 respondents who are Undeclared and 1 respondent from the College of Architecture and Planning. The results of this question can be seen on the chart on the following page.

Q24 - College of study;



The last demographic that was collected was if respondents were currently, or had ever been, enrolled in the Ball State Honors College. Of the responses that were gathered 38 respondents selected Yes, and 85 selected No. The data for this question is in the following graph.

Q25 - Are you currently or were you ever enrolled in the Honors College?

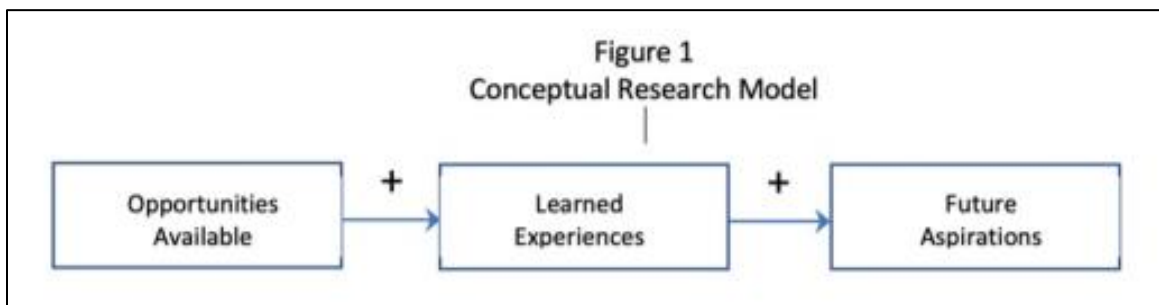


Procedure

Potential respondents were randomly selected from a sample frame list provided by the researchers' advisor comprised of all enrolled students. Of the surveys that were distributed via email invitation, there was a total of 128 responses. Respondents completed the survey online at a location of their choosing and were completely independent of the researcher. The research for this project aimed at trying to prove the following hypothesis: Opportunities available to an individual, learned experiences from professional/personal involvement, and future aspirations are all positively correlated and can be used to relate to the development of an individual's personal values.

Instrumentation

This research project followed the conceptual model seen in Figure 1. This model aims to show a positive correlation between the individual factors identified.



Participants were asked a total of 24 questions in the duration of the survey associated with this research project. 16 of those questions pertained to the specific factors of the conceptual model previously mentioned. The breakdown of the specific questions that were asked for each factor can be found in Table 1 on the following page.

Table 1 Questions and their respective factors		
	Question Number	Question
Factor 1 - Opportunities Available		
	Q19	The opportunities I have been given have helped me develop my future plans.
	Q16	I know that there are opportunities for personal and/or professional growth that are available to me that I have not taken full advantage of.
	Q13	I have had adequate opportunities to help me progress in my professional career compared to other individuals my age.
	Q7	I feel as though I have been given the same opportunities as other individuals my age.
Factor 2 - Learned Experiences		
	Q17	I actively pull from my past experiences when trying to achieve the goals I have set for myself.
	Q14	I believe that the more experience that a person has, the more prepared they are for their future.
	Q12	I feel as though I have had personal experiences that will benefit me in my future career.
	Q9	I feel as though I have had more professional experiences than the average person my age.
	Q5	I feel as though my past experiences, both professional and personal, have prepared me for my future career.
Factor 3 - Future Aspirations		
	Q18	I am confident I can achieve the professional goals that I have set for myself.
	Q15	I often think about what I will be doing in five (5) years.
	Q11	I openly discuss my future professional plans with others.
	Q10	I have a professional plan for my future.
	Q8	I know what profession I want to pursue after I graduate college.
	Q6	I am confident I can achieve the professional plans I have for my future.

Each of these questions were on the Likert Scale with answer possibilities of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree which were coded 1 to 4 respectively. Table 2 shows the sample means, noted by the symbol \bar{x} , and standard deviations, noted as SD, for each of the questions within their individual factors. It is important to note that every question had a sample mean below 2.50, showing strong agreement to each question. This shows respondent's strong understanding of each of the factors.

Table 2 Sample means and Standard Deviations of components			
	Question Number	\bar{x}	SD
Factor 1 - Opportunities Available			
	Q19	1.66	0.61
	Q16	1.71	0.61
	Q13	1.90	0.70
	Q7	2.07	0.84
Factor 2 - Learned Experiences			
	Q17	1.67	0.61
	Q14	1.47	0.63
	Q12	1.49	0.55
	Q9	2.30	0.86
	Q5	1.75	0.60
Factor 3 - Future Aspirations			
	Q18	1.72	0.63
	Q15	1.73	0.82
	Q11	1.80	0.74
	Q10	1.97	0.84
	Q8	1.84	0.85
	Q6	1.71	0.67

Factor analysis was conducted on each of these factors in order to simplify the components within each factor. These factors would then be used in a correlation analysis discussed later in this paper. The results of these tests can be found in the next section of this paper.

Results

Table 3 shows the item loadings for Factor 1, Opportunities Available, in a factor analysis. It is important to note that Q16 was excluded from this analysis by the researcher. Each component for this particular factor showed high numbers indicating a positive relation of these components to the overall factor.

Table 3 Item Loadings of Factor 1 Opportunities Available	
<u>Question Number</u>	<u>Component 1</u>
Q19	0.738
Q13	0.827
Q7	0.712

Table 4 shows the item loadings for Factor 2, Learned Experiences, in a factor analysis. Each component for this particular factor showed high numbers indicating a positive relation of these components to the overall factor.

Table 4 Item Loadings of Factor 2 Learned Experience	
<u>Question Number</u>	<u>Component 2</u>
Q17	0.677
Q14	0.570
Q12	0.753
Q9	0.690
Q5	0.726

Table 5 shows the item loadings for Factor 3, Future Aspirations, in a factor analysis. It is important to note that Q6 was excluded from this analysis by the researcher. Each component for this particular factor showed high numbers indicating a positive relation of these components to the overall factor.

Table 5 Item Loadings of Factor 3 Future Aspirations	
Question Number	Component 3
Q18	0.705
Q15	0.585
Q11	0.860
Q10	0.882
Q8	0.815

A correlation analysis was conducted with the results from the previously mentioned factor analyses. Table 6 shows the positive correlation between factors as a result of this test. These positive correlations confirm the relationships between each of the model components identified in Figure 1 are positive.

Table 6 Pairwise Correlations Between Opportunities Available, Learned Experiences, and Future Aspirations Factor Scores*			
	F1 Opportunities Available	F2 Learned Experiences	F3 Future Aspirations
F1 Opportunities Available			
F2 Learned Experiences	.675		
F3 Future Aspirations	.616	.664	
*All coefficients significant at $p < .01$			

Respondents to this project were asked six questions pertaining to their demographics. Each of these questions were compared to each of the individual factors in independent t-tests to look for any statistical differences between the groups. No statistically significant differences

were uncovered in any of these tests. This suggests that opportunities available, the learning resulting from these opportunities, and how this linkage translates into the development of future aspirations appears from this research to reflect a relatively universal process irrespective of the demographic profile attributes among survey respondents.

Discussion

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Where this study confirms positive relation between each factor proposed, future research should include additional factors to further explore the nature of the relationship. Additionally, this research should be replicated among other populations as the population of respondents in this study did not provide true portrayal of demographics outside of Ball State University. In future research, more statistical significance should be seen between individual factors and respondents various demographic groups. This significance will hopefully be seen with a more accurate representation from each of the demographic groups.

Future research should use the data from this study as a foundation to understanding how individuals develop their personal values. With all three of the factors identified in this study being positively correlated, these factors can be used to compare development of respondent's personal values. In doing so, this will begin the process of a deeper understanding of how individuals develop their personal brand, and can be used to compare development of individuals personal brand to other individuals that share similar demographics.

Conclusion

The hypothesis of this study was proven correct that the three factors identified in this research, opportunities available, learned experience from professional/personal involvement, and future aspirations, are all positively correlated. This positive correlation means that the more opportunities an individual has available to them, the more experience that individual will gain which will assist in that individual having bigger aspirations for their future. These three factors therefore relate to an individual's understanding of themselves that would be used by the individual when seeking future employment that aligns with their personal values and morals. By engaging in activities and employment that align with these values, individuals are actively shaping their own personal brand. This personal brand development is something that should be looked at in future research using the correlation of the factors identified in this study.

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Office of Research Integrity
 Institutional Review Board (IRB)
 2000 University Avenue
 Muncie, IN 47306-0155
 Phone: 765-285-5052
 Email: orihelp@bsu.edu

DATE: March 29, 2019

TO: Joe DiCola

FROM: Ball State University IRB

RE: IRB protocol # 1377479-1

TITLE: Who am I: Individual factors that influence development of personal values and how it relates to personal branding in a professional setting

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

DECISION: APPROVED

PROJECT STATUS: EXEMPT

DECISION DATE: March 29, 2019

REVIEW TYPE: Exempt Review

The designated reviewer for the Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed your protocol and determined the procedures you have proposed are appropriate for exemption under the federal regulations. As such, there will be no further review of your protocol, and you are cleared to proceed with the procedures outlined in your protocol. As an exempt study, there is no requirement for continuing review. Your protocol will remain on file with the IRB as a matter of record. All research under this protocol must be conducted in accordance with the approved submission and in accordance with the principles of the Belmont Report.

Exempt Categories:

	<p>Category 1: Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, that specifically involves normal educational practices that are not likely to adversely impact students' opportunity to learn required educational content or the assessment of educators who provide instruction. This includes most research on regular and special education instructional strategies, and research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.</p>
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X	Category 2: Research that only includes interactions involving educational test (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met: (i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through
	identifiers linked to the subjects; (ii) Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or (iii) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by 46.111(a)(7).
	Category 3: Research involving benign behavioral interventions in conjunction with the collection of information from an adult subject through verbal or written responses (including data entry) or audiovisual recording if the subject prospectively agrees to the intervention and information collection and at least one of the following criteria is met: (A) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of human subjects cannot be readily ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; (B) Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or (C) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can be readily ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by 46.111(a)(7).
	Category 4: Secondary research for which consent is not required.
	Category 5: Research and demonstration projects that are conducted or supported by a Federal department or agency, or otherwise subject to the approval of department or agency heads, and that are designed to study, evaluate, improve, or otherwise examine public benefit or service programs, including procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs, possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures, or possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs.
	Category 6: Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (i) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (ii) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
	Category 7: Storage or maintenance for secondary research for which broad consent is required: Storage or maintenance of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens for potential secondary research use if an IRB conducts a limited IRB review and makes the determinations required by 46.111(a)(8).

	<p>Category 8: Secondary research for which broad consent is required: Research involving the use of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens for secondary research use, if the following criteria are met: (1) Broad consent for the storage, maintenance, and secondary research use of the identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens was obtained in accordance with §46.116(a)(1) through (4), (a)(6), and (d); (2) Documentation of informed consent or waiver of documentation of consent was obtained in accordance with §46.117; and (3) An IRB conducts a limited IRB review and makes the determination required by §46.111(a)(7) and makes the determination that the research to be conducted is within the scope of the broad consent referenced in paragraph (d)(8)(i) of this section; and (iv) The investigator does not include returning individual research results to participants as part of the study plan. Note: This provision does not prevent an investigator from abiding by any legal requirements to return individual research results.</p>
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Ball State Specific Exempt Categories

	<p>Category 9: Research involving publicly observable online behavior. Any online behavior that requires a person's permission to access is considered private and does not fall under this category. Information that cannot be accessed by the general population would also be considered private.</p>
	<p>Category 10: Research involving BSU students who are under 18 but have legal authority over their FERPA protected information. Only studies that fall into another exempt category except for sampling from BSU students who are under 18 can be considered exempt in this category.</p>

While your project does not require continuing review, it is the responsibility of the P.I. (and, if applicable, faculty supervisor) to inform the IRB if the procedures presented in this protocol are to be modified or if problems related to human research participants arise in connection with this project.

Any procedural modifications must be evaluated by the IRB before being implemented, as some modifications may change the review status of this project. Please contact Grace Yoder at (765) 285-5034 or gmyoder@bsu.edu if you are unsure whether your proposed modification requires review or have any questions. Proposed modifications should be addressed in writing and submitted electronically to the IRBNet as a "Modification/Amendment" for review. Please reference your IRB protocol number 1377479-1 in any communication to the IRB regarding this project.

In the case of an adverse event and/or unanticipated problem, you will need to submit written documentation of the event to IRBNet under this protocol number and you will need to directly notify the Office of Research Integrity (<http://www.bsu.edu/irb>) **within 5 business days**. If you have questions, please contact Grace Yoder at (765) 285-5034 or gmyoder@bsu.edu.

Reminder: Even though your study is exempt from the relevant federal regulations of the Common Rule (45 CFR 46, subpart A), Ball State has elected to hold you accountable to these regulations to encourage best research practices. You and your research team are not exempt from ethical research practices and should therefore employ all protections for your participants and their data which are appropriate to your project.